

Greene County Master Gardener Volunteer Operations Manual

INTRODUCTION

This manual is intended to provide you, the Greene County Master Gardener Volunteer, with information covering many of the things you do as you participate in various master gardener volunteer activities. In this manual you will find useful information on day-to-day activities that affect master gardener volunteers in Greene County. It provides the information you need to answer your “How do I do that?” questions.

The Board of Trustees (Board) in conjunction with the OSU Extension Office for Greene County has approved this document and the Board is responsible for its maintenance. As conditions change, this document will be updated by the Board. This document will be on VMS for everyone’s use.

This is your document. If there are issues or processes that you would find useful if included, just pass your request to any member of the Board.

(In this document the OSU Extension Program Coordinator for Greene County will be identified as the “Coordinator”, the Greene County Master Gardener Volunteer Board of Trustees as the “Board”, the Green County Master Gardener Volunteers as the “GCMGV” or the “Membership” and the Agriculture and Natural Resources activities and officers as “ANR” activities and officers.)

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1. AWARDS AND RECOGNITION

Awards and recognition will be presented annually to GCMGVs. These awards and recognition can be given to individuals or groups of individuals (e.g. Projects). Awards will be given for actions that enhance the OSU Extension Master Gardener Volunteer program, promote self-improvement, support other master gardener volunteers and projects, and strengthen the Greene County, Ohio community. Annual awards will fall into three categories. (1) State, National and International Awards, (2) Milestone Awards for education and volunteer hours, and (3) Special Recognition for special actions on the part of individual master gardener volunteers or groups of master gardener volunteers.

The Awards committee will administer the annual awards and recognition program. Awards and special recognition will be presented yearly at the Winter Gathering. State, National and International Awards will be presented at the discretion of the Coordinator. Approved annual awards are listed at Attachment 1.

2. MEETING CANCELLATIONS DUE TO WEATHER

Notification of meeting cancellations due to hazardous weather conditions will be accomplished via text message or email alerts. Members will be asked to provide mobile or home phone numbers and email address for notifications.

3. NEW PROJECT REQUEST

Any proposed GCMGV project must be requested by preparing a New Project Request Form (See Attachment 2) for submission to the ANR Educator and/or Coordinator for consideration and approval. All issues identified on the attached project request form must be addressed. If approved, the ANR Educator and/or Coordinator will submit the request to the GCMGV Board for final approval and budgeting.

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4. PROJECT REVIEW STRATEGY AND CRITERIA

Once a year each active GCMGV project will be reviewed by the Coordinator for compliance with our mission and benefit for the community according to the following criteria.

Volunteer Hours - the number of hours taken from the VMS system record for the previous four years in the following categories:

- Education – prep or planning, setup, execution, post evaluation
- Compliance – yearly planning meeting, project leader meeting, OSU policy training (required in person training)
- Maintenance – area preparation, planting, weeding, etc.

4-Year History – Establish a history based upon the above curriculum

Project Lifespan – Original life span or expiration date of project

Present projected life span or expiration date

Outside Organization Involvement – External organizations contributing to or supporting the project

Community Benefit – Subjective evaluation by leadership

The Coordinator and Board will review the findings and approve the projects for continuation or deactivation.

5. REGAINING ACTIVE MGV STATUS

To regain Active status, an inactive member must: (1) inform the Coordinator of their desire to return to active status, (2) obtain the Coordinator's approval and (3) agree to a plan that will allow them to complete their annual requirements or other requirements.

Those individuals who request return to active status, complete their agreed return plan and are approved by the Coordinator will be considered Active upon receiving recertification, normally at the annual recertification time (Standards of Behavior, Pesticide Usage Policy, Title Usage Forms, and dues payment).

If the individual has been on inactive status for more than 3 years, in addition to meeting the requirements above, he/she must complete all requirements set forth by OSU Extension and the Coordinator.

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6. SCHOLARSHIPS

The GCMGV organization may present scholarships to deserving Greene County residents pursuing higher education within Ohio majoring in an agricultural, horticultural, or natural resources field. The amount of the scholarships will be determined annually and approved as part of the annual budget process. An ad hoc Scholarship Committee will administer this program. Scholarships will usually be presented in the late summer prior to the beginning of the academic year.

7. STANDING COMMITTEES

The following policies and procedures apply to all GCMGV Standing Committees. (See GCMGV Bylaws Article X)

Annually, GCMGVs will establish and maintain the following Standing Committees: Activities, Awards, Bylaws, Finance, Grants, Meeting Support, Programs, and Public Relations. Standing committees may be added to or deleted from this list at any time by the Board in coordination with the Program Coordinator.

Each committee will consist of approximately five (5) volunteers who will serve on a yearly basis. A call for committee member volunteers will be made at the October Business Meeting. From the list of volunteers for each standing committee the Board, in coordination with the Coordinator, will select the committee members and announce the committee make up at the November Business Meeting.

Each committee will meet following their appointment and select a member to serve as chairperson and will advise the Board and the Coordinator of the designated chairperson. Each new year's committee is then encouraged to meet the current year's committee to ensure a smooth transition between the outgoing and incoming committee members. The composition of each Standing Committee and chairperson will be posted to VMS.

Each committee will meet at least quarterly (monthly, when possible) and minutes of each meeting will be recorded. Detailed meeting minutes are not required. Each Standing Committee will report its meeting's activities to the Coordinator and the Board. Annually, usually in November, each Standing Committee may be asked to report its activities and accomplishments for the current year along with its recommendations for

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the following year(s) to the GCMGV Membership. Each committee's annual report will be posted to VMS.

These annual reports will be one of the tools used by the Board to help build the upcoming year's Goals and Objectives. Ongoing committee status reporting between January and August each year and planning for the following year's activities will also be used by the Treasurer and the Finance Committee as input into the Annual Budget for the upcoming year. Each standing committee will also submit a budgetary request for the following year by August 1st each year. The mission statement for each Standing Committee is at attachment 3.

NOTE: Special Purpose/Ad Hoc Committees will also follow these procedures except they will commence and terminate operations based upon satisfaction or termination of the specific need for which they were established. Also, Special Purpose/Ad Hoc Committees usually are created to support short-term, single-purpose activities, but can be established to support a multi-year need. When established for a multi-year purpose, it can retain its committee membership throughout. In this instance, those serving on a long-term, Special Purpose/Ad Hoc Committee need not be re-appointed each year.

8. TAX EXEMPT USE

GCMGVs are authorized to use our tax-exempt status when purchasing items for projects. Status is not for personal use. Forms for various suppliers are provided on VMS under Master Gardener Forms and Documents. Print the document and present it when making a purchase at that supplier. If there are any questions, please consult the Treasurer.

9. TREASURER'S OPERATIONS MANUAL

The Treasurer and the Finance Committee will work with the project managers and the committee chairpersons throughout the year to obtain information and financial documentation on expenditures and income. In addition, each project manager and standing committee chairperson will provide the Treasurer and the Finance Committee with its budget forecast and request for the following year.

The Treasurer will handle the monthly income and expense payments for the Membership and reconciliation of the Membership's accounts. Each month the Treasurer will submit the reconciliation and supporting documentation to the internal auditor for review and comment. Further each month the Treasurer will prepare a financial report and present the report to the Membership at the Membership's regular Business Meeting.

Each year the Treasurer will initiate a budget call to the program managers and the standing committee chairpersons for submission of budget requests for the following year. The budget call will usually commence around July 1st and all inputs are due to the Treasurer and Finance Committee by the end of July. The Treasurer and Finance Committee will take these inputs along with other financial information and develop a proposed budget and dues recommendation for the upcoming year. This proposed budget will be presented to the Board at its September meeting and the Board will approve the next year's budget for submission to the Membership at the September Business Meeting. The Membership will vote on approval of the next year's proposed budget at its Annual Meeting, usually in October.

Following the end of each calendar year the Treasurer will obtain an external audit review of the past year's financial activities. No later than the February Business Meeting each year the Treasurer will present the Financial Reconciliation Report for the recently completed year to the Membership. The Treasurer will maintain the legal, insurance, and finance records of the Membership. The Treasurer will timely file the necessary IRC 501(c)(3) reports with the Federal and state governments.

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In addition, the Treasurer will develop and maintain a Financial Operations and Transition Manual for the Treasurer position to facilitate day-to-day operations and transition of the newly elected member to the office. The Manual will detail those actions the Treasurer is required to perform and the accounts and records required to be maintained. The Treasurer will be available to the Membership to answer any questions about the legal, insurance, and financial matters of the GCMGV.

10. VIRTUAL ON-LINE MEETINGS

If due to unforeseen circumstances that in person meetings are not advisable then, internet on-line Business, Board, and Special meetings can be held electronically/virtually using capabilities such as OSU Carmen Zoom. The Board will announce the virtual meeting date and time in an E-Mail via VMS and the Coordinator will provide all members with the website address by VMS e-mail. Standard meeting agenda and procedures will apply throughout the virtual meeting. Should a vote be required during the meeting, the following procedures will be used:

- A. Voice Voting. At the discretion of the meeting chair, they may call for and conduct a voice vote. The results of the vote will be recorded in the meeting minutes. If the voice vote appears close or upon the request of any member present, a recorded vote shall be taken with Zoom poll.
- B. Recorded Voting. If a recorded vote is required, members will use capabilities such as a Zoom poll. The results of the vote will be displayed to the membership upon completion of the voting process and will be recorded in the meeting minutes.
- C. Secret Ballot Voting. For election of officers or other votes requiring a secret ballot during an electronic virtual meetings (Such as Carmen Zoom), members will use a Zoom poll to vote for one office (issue) at a time. The names of the candidates (usually 1 or 2 per office) will be on the ballot. Members will vote for the proper number of candidates (usually 1 or 2). Votes for more than the proper number will not be counted, but less is acceptable. No write-ins are permitted. The Coordinator (Zoom host) will announce or show the results of the poll. Only the results, not who voted for whom or numbers of votes per candidate, will be shown. The results will be recorded in the meeting minutes.

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Attachment 1

GREENE COUNTY MASTER GARDENER ANNUAL AWARDS AND QUALIFYING CRITERIA

The following award categories are available to Master Gardener Volunteers of Greene County on a yearly basis:

State Awards	}	Categories and criteria determined by awarding entity
National Awards		
International Awards	}	Hour thresholds determined by State MGV Coordinator
Volunteer Hour Milestones		
Educational Hour Milestones		

The following MGV recognition awards were established by the GCMGV Awards Committee and are available to recognise deserving GCMGVs yearly.

Sunshine Award - Given to a GCMGV whose helpfulness and positive attitude lifts the spirits of others.

Best in Season Award - Given in categories that include flowers, produce, and insects.

Community Service Award - Given to the GCMGV who grows and donates the greatest number of pounds of fresh produce from their home garden or community garden plot.

Dirtiest Jeans Award - Given to the GCMGV who wears the evidence of a day's work at a project.

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Attachment 2

GREENE COUNTY MASTER GARDENER NEW PROJECT REQUEST FORM

PURPOSE: Prepare a New Project Request using the following format for a new project. All sections must be addressed.

1. PROJECT LEADER
2. TITLE
3. PURPOSE (educational programs, beautification, food production)
4. LOCATION
5. DESCRIPTION and PLAN
6. TASKED ORGANIZATIONS and RESPONSIBILITIES
7. OUSIDE ORGANIZATIONS INVOLVED and AGREEMENTS
8. REQUESTED BUDGET (GREENE COUNTY MASTER GARDENER PROJECT AND BUDGET FORM found on VMS under Master Gardener Forms and Documents)
9. PROJECTED REVENUE
10. PARTICIPANTS and RECRUITMENT
11. PROJECT LIFE PLAN (include an exit strategy and whether project will be sustainable without MGV involvement)
12. APPROVAL/REJECTION (after review)

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Attachment 3

GREENE COUNTY MASTER GARDENER STANDING COMMITTEE MISSION STATEMENTS

Activities: The Activities Committee will identify and plan various activities in which the GCMGVs may participate. These include for example: visits to various ANR locations, participation in community events and festivals throughout Greene County, participation in the Greene County Fair, trips for Greene County MGVs, teambuilding and business meeting activities. The Committee will prepare a yearly schedule of activities in line with their year's budget request and submit these to the Board and Coordinator for approval by March 1st each year.

Once activities are approved, the Committee will work in direct coordination with the Coordinator to ensure successful completion of each activity. The Committee will submit the required entry paperwork, develop the participation plan and recruit and schedule volunteers. Once activities are accomplished, the Committee will submit a complete financial statement for that project in a timely manner to the Treasurer and the Finance Committee. The Activities Committee will also prepare and submit a funding estimate for the following Calendar Year to the Treasurer and the Finance Committee by August 1st each year.

Awards: The Awards Committee is responsible for assisting the Coordinator in reviewing and nominating projects and GCMGV's for Ohio Master Gardener Volunteer Yearly Awards and other national and international awards each spring. The committee will assist the Program Coordinator in preparing the nominating submissions and required documentation for each Ohio, national and international award nominating package. The Coordinator will submit the nomination packages to the appropriate agency and will advise the Board and the GCMGV membership of the submitted nominations at their respective May meetings. The results of these nominations will be announced at the discretion of the Coordinator when received or at the Annual Meeting in the Fall.

The Committee is also responsible for identifying any individual or group whose special actions supporting the Master Gardener Program warrant recognition. The Committee will develop specific categories for recognition

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including gardening practices as well as categories that promote morale and team building. The Committee will make selections for recognition awards and send to the Board and Coordinator by December 1 each year. The Board and Coordinator will review Committee selections at their December Board Meeting. Those individuals selected to receive a recognition award will be announced at the Winter Gathering.

Bylaws: The Bylaws Committee will manage the review and modification of the GCMGV Bylaws. The Committee will provide the Board with the identification of issues and recommended changes to the GCMGV Bylaws as they arise. An Official Review of the Bylaws must be accomplished every five (5) years.

Finance: The Finance Committee will support the actions of the Board Treasurer. Support will include the gathering and review of budget requests and receipts from project leaders and committee chairpersons. The Finance Committee will work with the Treasurer to prepare budget status reports and the Annual Budget and Financial Status Report of the Corporation.

The Annual Budget will be submitted for approval by the GCMGV Membership at the Fall Annual Meeting and the Annual Financial Status Report will be presented to the Membership no later than its February Business Meeting.

Grants: The Grants Committee will assist the Board and Coordinator in the overall management of grant activities throughout the GCMGV operations. The committee will be given grant needs from within the group annually and then find appropriate grants that can fit this need and timeframe. The Committee will develop the year's recommended grant candidates to the Program Coordinator who will provide recommendations from the Board by March 1st each year. Once a recommended course of action is approved, the committee with the assistance of the Coordinator will prepare grant submissions.

The Committee will prepare grant applications and each application will be reviewed by the Board Treasurer and Coordinator prior to submission. Once submitted, the Committee will monitor the status of each application,

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prepare responses to questions received from grant agencies and advise the Board, the Coordinator and the Finance Committee of grant application results.

Grants are an ongoing process due to varied cycles and timelines. The responsibility of the committee is to advise the Coordinator and the Board of appropriate timeframes for timely grant submittal.

Meeting Support: The Meeting Support Committee will manage the following for GCMGV monthly Business Meetings and other formal ANR programs when requested by the Program Committee: set up and tear down of meeting chairs and tables, set up and removal of audio and video equipment, refreshments and door prizes, when required. The Meeting Support Committee will work under the direction and guidance of the Coordinator. The Meeting Support Committee will also prepare and submit a funding request for the following Calendar Year to the Finance Committee by August 1st each year.

Programs: The Program Committee will support the Coordinator in the planning and execution of OSU Extension Greene County sponsored GCMGV and Agriculture and Natural Resources (ANR) programs. In addition, this committee will support the delivery of ANR programs by the GCMGV for presentation to the Greene County community. The Program Committee under the guidance of the Coordinator will execute current year approved programs. The Program Committee with the approval of the Coordinator will prepare a proposed GCMGV ANR programs estimate for the following year and submit a funding estimate to the Finance Committee by August 1st each year for use in the budgetary process.

The committee will continue to develop a proposed list of the following year's GCMGV ANR programs in coordination with the Coordinator and present this list to the Board for approval by November 1st each year. The proposed list will include cost and income projections, topics, timing, location, recommended speakers and projected attendance. Once approved, the program list for the year will be introduced to the GCMGV membership at its Winter Gathering usually held in January.

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The Program Committee must work in close coordination with the Public Relations Committee to ensure successful execution of planned programs.

Public Relations: The Public Relations Committee will primarily provide on-line and hard copy advertising support to the GCMGV Board and the Coordinator. The Public Relations Committee will be made up of the Coordinator, the Greenline Team Leader, the Article Editor and the Facebook Administrator. The Committee will meet every two to three weeks (seasonally dependent) to ensure Facebook postings and written article submissions are timely and in step with current home agricultural issues.

All media copy and hard copy distributed products must be approved in advance of distribution by the Coordinator. The Public Relations Committee will also prepare and submit a funding request for supported GCMGV activities for the following calendar year to the Finance Committee by August 1st each year.